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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.

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OCTOBER 13, 1911.

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THE CHOLERA SITUATION.

There has been no material change in the cholera situation during the past week.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE VIABILITY OF THE EGGS OF HOOKWORMS (*Necator americanus*) AND OF EELWORMS (*Ascaris lumbricoides*) IN FECES ALLOWED TO DECOMPOSE IN WATER.

By CH. WARDELL STILES, Professor of Zoology, and HARRY MCCLURE MILLER, B. S., Assistant, Hygienic Laboratory, Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

In the summer of 1910, a series of experiments¹ was begun at the United States marine hospital, Wilmington, N. C., to test the viability of eggs of parasites, especially of hookworms, under certain conditions which come into consideration in connection with preventing the spread of intestinal zooparasitic diseases.

Circumstances beyond our control excluded the possibility of examining the experimental material at stated intervals, but the results obtained appear to give definite and instructive clues of considerable importance in respect to the viability of hookworm eggs and *Ascaris* eggs.

As pointed out in an earlier article, work of this kind in connection with animal parasites is of somewhat different nature from the corresponding work with bacteria.

The following experiments were reported upon, in part, in former papers by Stiles and Gardner. The object of the tests was to determine how long the eggs could live in water containing a considerable quantity of fecal material.

Experiment 17.—In an earlier paper it was reported that in this experiment fecal material containing eggs of *Ascaris* and *Necator* was placed (June 22, 1910) in a bucket of water, and that after 144 and 149 days 30 hookworm eggs and 5 *Ascaris* found were dead.

The bucket was allowed to stand from November 13, 1910, to July 12, 1911, at room temperature, water being added occasionally to replace the water that evaporated. On July 12, 1911 (385 days after

¹ See Public Health Reports, Vol. XXV, No. 27, July 8, 1910, pp. 947-950; No. 33, Aug. 19, 1910, pp. 1137-1140; No. 30, Dec. 16, 1910, pp. 1825-1830. This series of experiments was begun by Stiles and Gardner; owing to illness, Surg. Gardner has been unable to continue the work.